Corning rolls out new glass for devices, lauds Chinese partners

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Corning's Gorilla Glass is used on the Nokia N8's screen  
Corning Inc, a 167-year-old American multinational company specializing in glass and ceramic materials, on Wednesday released a new version of its durable device glass and reiterated its business commitment to China.  
"As consumers become more dependent on their smartphones, the opportunity for potentially damaging drops is also on the rise. Now more than ever, it's critical the cover glass provides outstanding protection," said John Bayne, vice-president and general manager of Corning Gorilla Glass.  
He said Gorilla Glass 6 "has been engineered to survive multiple drops", up to 15 from a height of 1 meter.  
Since its launch in September 2007, with Apple using it for the iPhone and iPod Touch, Corning Gorilla Glass has become the cover glass of choice for global device manufacturers.  
To date, about 45 major brands have installed Corning's glass into 6 billion consumer electronic devices worldwide.  
Corning also reiterated its commitment to China – the market, technology and collaboration.  
Among all markets, China is the one that Corning "is heavily embedded with", said James Hollis, who oversees sales and application engineering at Gorilla Glass.  
"I realized that there is a slower pace of growth in China, a flat market right now, but it remains very important to us, not only from the local sale/distribution standpoint, but because Chinese device manufacturers have become leaders regarding consumer usage outside of China," he said.  
Last year, Chinese smartphone brands such as Huawei and Xiaomi captured 48 percent of global market share. Domestically, Huawei sold 102 million smartphone units to consumers, followed by OPPO and Vivo, with sales of 77.56 million and 72.23 million units, respectively.  
"We have an excellent working relationship with leading Chinese manufacturers of mobile devices," he continued.  
Bayne said Corning is a trusted partner in China.  
"They would invite us to come to their lab – to test glasses on their phones and allow us to influence their designs in an early stage," he said.  
"That is because they (Chinese manufacturers) know they need to partner with their key suppliers to develop the best products," Bayne said.  
However, many other manufacturers would say, "'Just give us your glass prices. I don't want to see how the glass drops (in the test). I don't want your people in our labs,'" Bayne said. "How could we do well that way?"  
Corning, based in a town in New York state that bears its name, has established 12 facilities and factories throughout China in the past two decades, covering all of its five major business sectors: display technologies, environmental technologies, life sciences, optical communications and specialty materials, said Li Fang, president and general manager of Corning's Greater China area.  
"In July, we announced to invest in the upgrade and renovation of a plant in Hefei, Anhui province. We plan to start production of automobile touch-screen glasses in 2019," Li said.

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